

dishart these men  
 hand He long await/long prophes of G/ He only hum  
 cannot find fault Pete no complete accept this  
 but exam close we C forces work discip's lives,  
 in partic life Pete  
 Pete given inspiration G able identify Messiah  
 but still human : satan give doubts/mistrust 2  
 no completely trust G what happen Js accord G's plan  
 & all work out benefit, good all mankind  
 All this C reflect selves/Pete accep G's anoint  
 when find out what happen no accept turn from him  
He do this!!!!  
 have had centuries xpian Ch 2 show history suff Jav  
 We accep this go thru observ ea yr  
 Yet, inner thots, outward acts prefer discipship  
 that lv cross out of it  
 Mults peop ask demand relig moderate & sensible  
 Anything calls Dship means compl involvment of self  
 is thot 2 B extreme  
 Any Ch or cong seek reach out 2 lost unsave is thot  
 of by sum to B extreme, fanatical  
 But remain vss scrip Js count true cost dship  
 This involve take cross daily follow Him  
 Thus it involve cross 4 us  
 Perhaps not same Js/but mean crucifix self  
 It mean live 4 G, have G live in us then  
 Js call Pete satan this signif when realize Js ~~hate~~  
 accuse Pete look after things man not G  
 This tempt all face many pts lives  
 Many well mean friends give advice seem rt, pure  
 But if analyze lite what G want from us,  
 realize from devil, satan  
 Last Sun Conf class talk conscience tell good thing  
 Voice tell bad thing satan.  
 1 yg pers ask how know what voice G & what our ~~voice~~ mind  
 This diffi answer  
 but if strive sort out what G have us do given situa  
 we mor likely listen 2 G than we are listen own  
 motives, desires  
 All this we C peop surround Js much like we/same stuff  
 But can C tru dship mor than verbal assent 2 Js Xp  
 It mean/should mean ~~complete~~ complete surrender  
 selves 2 Him  
 Should mean take up cross/follow Him daily  
 any denial this is fall prey satan forces evil  
 There is no easy, sensible relig.  
 in-between/we either 4 or against Him as He pt  
 out 2 Pete.  
 Where do we stand this 7 as strive 2 piece passion  
 story of our Lord together?

# "Piece By Piece -- Caesarea Philippi!"

Mt: Mark 8:33, "But when He had turned about and  
 looked on His disciples, He rebuked Peter, saying,  
Get thee behind me satan; for thou sayest not the  
truth: that be of God, but the things that be of men.  
 Scripture: Mark 8:27-33

Js now arrive C. Ph approx 25 mi N Bethsaida  
 few gain have little go on time tween Beth & C Ph  
 Thing import, events transpire ca incident  
 C Ph terrace 1150 abov Sea lev/o'look Jord valley  
 All terrace water stream from cave/this Jord sorc  
 Early hist called Bdlm/cen worship Baal  
 2day call Banias  
 Second name ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~land~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~god~~ ~~nature~~  
 Give by Aug C 2 Herod Gr bilt temp there  
 after detl 480 give Tetrarchy Ph/enlarge beautify  
 call it C Ph honor Tiberias J's self  
 C Ph only mention 2 in Bih/Herod Agrip slain ang L  
 in Acts 12/Cornelius live Acts 10  
 1 imprison 2 yrs Acts 23  
 Irony Js ask who peop think He is this center Gr Rom  
 culture/prob still temp there  
 He minis/do miracu/peop silent on identity  
 Short time left/want discip's know what go happen  
 He prob question minis wonder how did?  
 This natural seek results 4 no one ask who He was  
 So ask discip's/reply Jn Bap, Elijah, others  
 Who they say? /Pete blurt "Thou art the Christ"  
 Now secret out/no longer secret 2 B hid even tho  
 ( 11 discip's no tell  
 They now aware/He Bgin tell what happen future  
 Pete begin Rebuke/ this word use 2 ways  
 " it disapproval what He say/he no tell Js off  
 it like we say, "O no, that no happen you. Not U"  
 Js reply reprimand/He tell Pete off/like Satan in wil  
 1 big object less prob all herd B4,  
 this Js tell 1st time future events His life  
 But what really need look at is less Pete Js rel  
 Pete outspoken/general 1st make comment/perceive  
 his scrip he print out who Js is  
 without hesi blurt "Thou art the Christ"  
 Thus affirm/Messiah/promised 1/Anointed 1, Xp means  
 promised 1 of G heir David throne  
 Js discip's set C Messiah go action Zap enemies  
 But He tell He no do this/insted B reject  
 Taken B4 powers B/tried/put deth

"Piece By Piece -- Caesaria Philippi!"

Text: Mark 8:33, "But when he had turned about and looked on his disciples, He rebuked Peter, saying, 'Get thee behind me satan; for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men.'"

Scripture: Mark 8:27-33

Jesus has now arrived at Caesaria Philippi, which if we check it on a map, is approximately 22 to 25 miles directly North of Bethsaida which was His stopping point in our Sunday piece of the puzzle. Once again we have little to go on as to how much time has elapsed since Jesus was in Bethsaida and if we accept it as it is written it was the next event that took place in the life of Jesus. And considering the content of this Scripture, I think that the important thing contained in all of this narrative is not time schedules and periods that it took Jesus to travel from one place to another. But rather, the events ~~xxx~~ which transpired in each incident.

Caesaria Philippi was situated on a terrace 1150 feet above sea level. It overlooked the very fertile North end of the Jordan valley. In fact all of this terrace was watered by a stream which gushed forth from a cave, and this stream was supposedly the source of the river Jordan. In its very earliest history, Caesaria Philippi was called Balinas, because it had been a great center for the worship of Baal. Today, a small village named Banias stands <sup>earliest</sup> here. The second name of Caesaria Philippi was Tania and it was named for the god Pan the greek god of nature. It was given by Augustus Caesar to Herod the Great and he built a beautiful temple there. After his death in 4 BC it was given as a part of the tetrarchy of Philip and he enlarged and beautified the city, and gave it the name of Caesarea Philippi in honor of Tiberias Caesar and himself.

Caesaria Philippi is only mentioned twice in the Bible, but it was the place where Herod Agrippa was ~~xxxxxx~~ struck down by an angel of the Lord as recorded

Acts 12. It was also where Cornelius ~~xx~~ the centurion lived, in Acts 10, and where Paul was imprisoned for 2 years as recorded in Acts 23.

Thus it is rather ironic and significant that the events which took place in

this Scri ture took place in Caesarea Philippi. Here in this center of Greek-To n culture, where probably the white marble temple to ~~xxx~~ the Greek god Pan still stood, Jesus ~~for the first time~~ ~~asked~~ ~~who~~ ~~people~~ ~~were~~ ~~saying~~ ~~He~~ ~~was~~. He had been among many other people and He had ministered and done marvelous things. But in all of this, the people were silent as to His identity. Jesus probably was keenly aware that His days were now being numbered, and He wanted His disciples to know who He was and what was going to take place in a very short time. So this is probably the reason why they withdrew to this out of the way spot for the moment.

Jesus was probably looking at His ministry and questioning whether He had actually achieved anything in it. I believe that it would have been a natural thing for Him to question the results, for no one had really discovered, or had taken the time to discover who He really was. So He asked His disciples w<sup>h</sup> others said He was. They replied that He was being compared to John the Baptist and Elijah or another prophet. But this did not really satisfy what He was trying to elicit from them. So He asks them who they say He is. And we see that Peter is very quick to blurt out, "Thou art the Christ." Now the secret is out. No longer will it remain a secret, even though Jesus charges them to tell no one of what they have learned.

So now that they are aware of who He is, He begins to tell them of the events that will take place in the near future, and how He will be killed and rise again from the dead. And Mark points out that Peter began to rebuke Him. And following this Jesus rebukes Peter. Now the word rebuke is used in two different ways here. In the usage of Peter it is a disapproval of what Jesus is saying. It is not as would seem the case that Peter is telling Jesus off, as we think of a rebuke. He is saying something along the lines of, "Oh no, t cannot happen to you. Not you Lord."

But Jesus' reply is a reprimand. It is said in the way of telling Peter off. Jesus is probably using it in the same context as when He spoke to Satan in the wilderness, when He was tempted by Satan there.

There is one very large object lesson in all ~~xxxxi~~ of this that most of you have probably heard several times before, and that is the lesson of Jesus telling publicly of His impending trial and death for the first time. This is very important I believe. But the object lesson I believe we need to really look at is the lesson of Peter and just where he stands in relation to Jesus Christ.

Peter was a very outspoken man. He was generally the first to make a comment or to perceive what Jesus was trying to point out. In this section of Scripture he once again proves equal to the occasion. Here he is as the one who spots perfectly who Jesus really is. Without much hesitation he blurts out, "Thou art the Christ." Thus he affirms for all of the rest, that here is the promised one, "the Messiah," or more particularly "the Anointed One," which is what Christ really means. But in any event, here is the promised one of God who is going to be the heir to the throne of David. Thus, the disciples are now set to see this Messiah go into action and zap the enemies of the Jews.

But then He begins to tell them that He is not going to do all of this, but instead ~~ix~~ He is going to be rejected by the ~~xxxx~~ rulers of the Jews, and He is going to be taken to the powers that be and is going to be put to death. How disheartening for these men. On one hand He is the long awaited and long prophesied one of God, and yet He is going to be just as human as any one else and is going to die. So we cannot really find too much fault with Peter when he cannot completely accept this. But when we examine this closely we can see the forces at work in ~~xxxxxxx~~ the disciple's lives, and in particular the life of Peter.

Peter has been given the inspiration of God to be able to identify the Messiah. But he is still human and Satan gives him the doubts and mistrust to not completely trust in God that what is going to happen to Jesus is according to God's plan, and will work out ~~xxxxxxx~~ for the benefit and good of all ~~xxxxxx~~ ~~xxxx~~ mankind.

Now in all of this, again we can see a reflection of ourselves. Peter had accepted ~~the~~ Jesus as God's anointed, and then when he finds out what is going to happen to Him, he cannot accept this, and he turns from Him. We do this. We have had all of the intervening years of the Christian church to show us the history of the Suffering Saviour. We accept this and we go through the observance of this each year. And yet, in our inner thoughts and our outward actions we prefer a discipleship that leaves the cross out of it. ~~people xxxxxx for xxx and xxx and~~ Multitudes of people ask for and demand a religion that is moderate, and what they refer to as sensible. Anything that calls for a discipleship that means the complete involvement of self is thought of as being extreme. Any Church or congregation that seeks to reach out to the lost and the unsaved is thought of as being extreme or fanatical.

~~for xxxxxx xxxxxx xxxxxx xxxxxx xxxxxx xxxxxx xxxxxx xxxxxx xxxxxx xxxxxx~~

In the remaining verse of this Scripture, Jesus counts the cost of true discipleship, and this involves the taking up of one's cross and following Him. So you see it does involve a cross for each of us.

Perhaps not in the sense nor the same way as it meant in Jesus' life, but it means a crucifixion of self. It means to live for God, and to have God live in us.

Jesus calls Peter Satan and this is significant when we realize that Jesus then accuses Peter of looking after the things of men and not of God. This is the temptation we all face at many points of our lives. There are many well meaning friends who will give us advice that seems so right and pure, but if we analyze it in the light of what God wants from us, we realize that it is from the devil, Satan.

This past Sunday in the Confirmation class ~~xxxxxxx xxxxxx xxxxxx xxxxxx~~ we were talking about our conscience and how God speaks to us in our lives. I mentioned that God nor our conscience never tells us to do bad or evil things. The voices that we hear telling us to do bad things is from Satan. One of the young people asked the question how we can know what is the voice of God and what is our own minds



telling us to do something.

This is difficult to answer. But if we strive to sort out what God would really have us do in a given situation, we are more likely to listen to what God wants of us, than we are to listen to our own motives and desires. But in all of this we see that once again the lives of the people who surrounded Jesus were made up of the same stuff as we. But we can also see that true discipleship means more than just a verbal assent to Jesus Christ. It means or should mean in our lives, the surrendering of ourselves completely to Him. It should mean that we take up our cross and follow Him daily. Any denial of this is to fall prey to Satan and his forces of evil. There is no easy, sensible religion. No in between. We are either for or against Him, as He pointed out to Peter. Where do we stand this year as we strive to piece the Passion story of Jesus together?



Shirley & Ralph Charles Link, Nancy Link, Dale with Lianne his wife, Lloyd Link with Karen his wife  
Jessica in front of Ralph C. Link  
Ethan and Alisha in front of R. Dale and Lianne Link (the eldest son & family)











Ralph C. Link  
153 Keck Road  
Sarver, Pa. 16055  
(412) 352-1103

Born: April 9, 1929, Pittsburgh, Pa.  
Married: December 15, 1951  
Wife: Shirley Margaret Neill  
Born: December 8, 1930, Pittsburgh, Pa.

Children: Ralph Dale Link, born May 11, 1955, Pittsburgh, Pa.  
Lloyd Alan Link, born May 28, 1958, Pittsburgh, Pa.  
Nancy Lynn Link, born March 15, 1961, Butler, Pa.

**SCHOOLING:**

Graduated from Perry High School, Pittsburgh, Pa.  
June 1947

Lay Ministry School, Penn West Conference of United  
Church of Christ, September 1965 to May 1969

Commissioned Lay Minister June 1969

Lancaster Theological Seminary, Lancaster, Pa.,  
September 1970

Graduated from Lancaster Theological Seminary May 1974

Ordained to Christian Ministry March 10, 1974

**PASTORATES:**

As Lay Minister: short term, 1 month or less in  
various churches 1965 to 1967

Emlenton Lamartine Charge of United Church of Christ  
1967 to 1969

Short term in various churches 1970 until Seminary  
entrance July 1970

July 1970 to December 1973 Student Pastor at Trinity  
Charge, New Bloomfield, Duncannon, Pa., Penn Central  
Conference, United Church of Christ

December 1973 to present, St. Paul's United Church of  
Christ, Butler, Pa., Penn West Conference, United  
Church of Christ

## PERSONAL TESTIMONY

OF

Ralph C. Link

I am the youngest of five children. I was born just prior to the onset of the Depression. Our family was very poor. My father was an alcoholic and my mother was a very religious person who was searching for the Lord. During my childhood she did her best to teach me the things of the Lord. Later in life she came to a personal relationship with Him.

I grew up in the Evangelical and Reformed Church where salvation by grace alone was not preached nor taught. I knew all about Jesus, what He did, how He lived, His miracles, His death and resurrection, but I didn't know Him personally.

My life had many ups and downs and all the while I was attending church and striving with my good works to please God. At a very low point in my life when we were deeply in debt and my wife and three children were all ill, I came to the crossroads. I watched a Billy Graham Crusade on television from some distant city and the message he preached seemed to be directed right at me. I wrestled with making that commitment to Christ, but didn't. The next afternoon and evening at work on the 4 to 12 shift I came to the conclusion that I needed to make that commitment to Christ. It seemed like there was no other choice if life was to have any meaning. That night when I came home from work at 1:00 A.M., I laid face down on the living room floor and told God that I couldn't live my life in my own strength and I accepted the gift of salvation from my Savior Jesus Christ. My life has never been the same.

Through several meaningful circumstances I was called by God to serve Him in the Christian Ministry and to help spread that wonderful message of salvation through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. What a wonderful and rewarding time it has been and I give Him all the praise for my salvation and the opportunity to serve Him.



## STATEMENT OF FAITH

OF

Ralph C. Link

I believe the Bible, both the Old and New Testaments to be the inspired inerrant Word of God. I believe the Bible is the complete revelation of His will for the salvation of men and it is the final authority for the Christian faith and life.

I believe in one God, who is eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

I believe in the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ that He is true God and true man. I believe that He was born of the Virgin Mary, that He lived in sinless life, that He performed the miracles recorded in Scripture, that He died on the cross as a sacrifice for our sins, that He bodily arose from the dead, that He ascended on high where He is at the right hand of Almighty God as our intercessor.

I believe in the Holy Spirit and that He comes and indwells each believer at the time of conversion. I believe that He lives in each believer to lead, to instruct, and to convict so that a believer may live a more godly life.

I believe that through the shed blood of Jesus Christ and through His resurrection, this is the only ground for justification and salvation for all who receive Him. A Lord and Savior and to such as receive Him, they are born of the Holy Spirit and become children of God.

I believe water baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances of the Church but are not means of salvation.

I believe in the personal and premillennial and imminent coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I believe in the resurrection of the dead, for the believer to resurrection of life and joy with the Lord, for the unbeliever to resurrection of judgement and everlasting punishment.